

The Robert Matches House  
Browertown Road above Long Hill Road  
Little Falls Township, Passaic County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-595

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer  
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The Robert Matches House  
Browertown Road above Long Hill Road  
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Owner: The Salvation Army, Inc.

Date of Erection: 1844-1856

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Robert Matches (owner 1844-1856)

Present Condition: Original, but with probable  
gable roof replaced by mansard roof, and  
front porch added

Number of Stories: Two and three, and cellar

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - formal coursed ashlar brown  
sandstone

Interior walls - stone party wall and frame  
partitions

Chimneys - brick

Roof - mansard slate roofed and top deck  
metal roofed

Historical Data:

The identification of the original owner  
as having been one Robert Matches, and date of  
erection of this house as 1844 has been possible as  
the result of search in the public records, reported  
as follows:

By his will dated 20 February 1836, and  
proved 20 March 1838, John Van Waggoner of Aquackanonk  
Township, Essex County (now in Passaic County) bequeathed  
to his mother Jane Shelp the sum of \$3000 and the use  
of his "homestead house" during her lifetime, to his  
half sisters and brothers, Sarah Shelp \$500 when aged

21, and to Jacob and William Shelp, Phebe wife of Adrian Van Blarcom, and Mary Ann Shelp the residue of his real estate, binding his executors to sell the same and divide the proceeds equally among those devisees.

Accordingly, by their deed of 5 June 1844, the executors and heirs conveyed to Robert Matches, likewise of Aquackanonk Township, part of the real estate whereof the said John Van Wagoner died seized, being in that Township, for \$727.14, describing this part as fronting on the north side of the public road leading around the Big Hill, from the Notch to the Little Falls, (Lower Notch Road) and extending westward to Peckman's River, the tract being divided by the Morris Canal, some 15 acres to the east and 22 to the west side thereof, "together with all and singular the trees, fences, ways, waters, profits," etc.

The grantee Robert Matches obviously was the builder of the house here considered, and its date can be established as having been after his purchase of the 37 acre tract in 1844 as above, and before 30 January 1856. On the latter date, Robert Matches and his wife Agnes, being of Aquackanonk Township (and probably residing in this house) conveyed to John C. Cruikshank of the same place, for \$5200, the same lot described above, with the so-called "Rifle Camp Lot" of 16 acres elsewhere in the township.

By deeds of 6 July 1910, the heirs of Cruikshank conveyed to George W. Sherman of Little Falls Township(a) the same 37 acre property excepting the parts used by the Morris Canal and Banking Company and by the public use of the Browertown Road, both of which crossed through the tract and thereby enclosed a 2 acre lot on which stands the house here surveyed.

(a) The house stands in the part of Aquackanonk Twp., which was set off as Little Falls Twp.

The grantee Sherman held title only until 18 August next, on which date he gave a deed conveying to Adolph Wack of Belleville Township, Essex County, the said lot between the canal and road. The last named owner passed this lot to Jacob Ehrlich, also of Belleville, by his deed of 31 May 1919, from whom it passed to Vernon R. Post in 1921, and finally to The Salvation Army, Inc., of the State of New Jersey, on 15 June, 1934, the owners at the time of our survey of the house in 1940.

Bibliography:

A search of title in Land and Probate records of Passaic and Essex Counties by Thomas J. Riley, H.A.B.S. abstractor

Lewis D. Cook  
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams  
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.  
District Officer

TW 10/4/40